1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

of which have been revealed to him by some spirit. A certain grass, said to be the favorite food of tapirs, is endowed with great medicinal virtues. It is used not only to cure but also to prevent sickness (Henry, 1941, p. 88). Massages play a great part in therapeutics. Sometimes these are so violent that the practitioner steps on the patient's stomach. The skin is frequently rubbed with pulverized barks or plants before the treatment. Burning herbs are used therapeutically, particularly for wounds. A patient bitten by a snake is laid upon a slanting platform over a fire and given warm water to drink to make him vomit. Manizer (1930, p. 784) was impressed by the number of people whose heads, arms, or legs were swathed in *Philodendron* for therapeutic purposes. To lessen fatigue on a long walk, the Indians bandage their legs up to the hip with tight braids. (On *Caingang* medicine, see Paula Souza, 1918, pp. 750–753.)

Bloodletting, which is practiced with a flint flake or a piece of glass, is a common cure for many ailments. Like many Indians, the *Caingang* treat fever with cold baths. Breathing on the affected spot is a common means of assisting a suffering person. Wounds are sprinkled with pulverized jaborandy powder.

When illness is caused by the loss of the soul, the patient may recover if appropriate words are spoken to induce the soul to return. It is often promised food. If the shaman's diagnosis reveals that the disease has been brought about by invisible missiles shot by a spirit, the cure consists of extracting them with the mouth. This procedure, however, was observed only among the *Aweikoma-Caingang* of Santa Catarina.

Magic practices.—To drive clouds away, old women blow against the right hand and then wave it toward the clouds, spreading the fingers as if to disseminate their breath. When the *Aweikoma-Caingang* desire rain, they put their mouths to the water and blow. They take some in their hands and cry, as they throw it upward, "Look here! Do like this." (Henry, 1941, p. 94.) Ashes thrown into a river are expected to stop its rise.

Divining.—According to Lozano (1873, 1:427), *Guayaná* shamans drank maté in order to consult spirits. Answering questions put to them by their clients, the shamans always said, "The grass [maté] told me this or that." Among modern *Aweikoma*, a man may be requested to drink maté and to belch while he is asked questions. A strong belch is interpreted as "No" and a weak one as "Yes" (Henry, 1941, p. 88).

In order to know which animals will be killed and where they will be found, the *Aweikoma-Caingang* set fire to a heap of pine-wood charcoal. The size of the spark corresponds to an animal species and the place where it twinkles indicates where the game will be slain.

basket in the water for the fish, and they came along and plumped into it. He showed her so that he and she might both see it all the time." The essential features of this very mild incident are the simple nature of the instruction and the division of the fish species into supernatural untouchables and natural touchables. This was characteristic of every animal category—some of it was recognizable by the shaman as supernatural, and the rest was natural and might be killed and eaten. When we remember that the spirit a person sees constantly is his close friend and companion, we can readily understand this cautious examination of the scene by the shaman and his painstaking selection of the animals to be killed and those to be left alone. Some of them are children of his friend, and the rest are simply animals which the spirit gives to him for food.

Spirits control their species and keep them in inclosures from which they let them out from time to time. When they are angered, either because too many have been killed or because some have not been killed, they close them up again and animals become scarce. Failure to bring down an animal is an unfortunate occurrence which annoys the spirit, but refusal to take a tapir or deer or any other animal which the *nggiyúdn* offers is tantamount to refusing food from a human benefactor and can have but one outcome, death. Whoever turns away from quarry pointed out by a spirit is bound to fall ill and die.

The more we examine the ways in which the Kaingáng maintained the bonds that united them with supernatural benefactors, the more we discover that they duplicated in any number of details the complex of relationships and feelings through which security was maintained in their own society. One more point may be added. Over and over again, malevolent supernaturals are referred to by the sinister term of "different thing," but guardian spirits were never called by this term; for "different things" are dangerous things, and guardian spirits were friendly and helpful.

Like most primitive peoples, the Kaingáng obtain from spirits some powers to cure disease, but this side of Kaingáng supernaturalism was very slightly developed. In many cultures in which religious values rate high, the powers to cure and kill supernaturally bring great rewards. But the Kaingáng never killed supernaturally; the most they did in this direction was to throw people into a deep sleep so that they could murder them with lance or club. They did cure through the agency of the supernatural, but the shaman received no pay for his efforts, and his practice was generally limited to his own immediate family. The ministerings of the shaman were viewed as attentions naturally received from a close relative. No shaman ever extended the benefits of his practice outside his own extended family. Kaingáng culture did not define achievement in supernatural terms—shamanistic powers of any kind were not even something to boast about or to plume oneself on. The most that a very powerful shaman got from his

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

of men. One day Klendó, a man about sixty-five, and I were sitting together in my little house discussing the *kuplêng*. Gradually clouds gathered in the west. The wind began to mount, and at last with a rush the storm swept up the valley. As the wind increased in violence the look of anxiety intensified on Klendó's face. He gazed with frightened eyes through the window before us, and his mind wandered as he watched in fascination the rivulets of water trickling under the frame. At last the catch on the window that faced the wind snapped, and with a burst of thunder and lightning and a swirl of wind and rain, the window was flung open, drenching the house in an instant and sending my papers flying. Klendó was seized with acute terror, and jumping up with more animation than he had shown in weeks, he dashed to the door, opened it a crack, and bellowed: "My *kôklá*,[19] I am afraid of you; so stop! My *kôklá*, you are angry with me; so you have made the storm!" Thus he shouted to his *kôklá*, his second father, a man with whom he had had a most friendly relationship while he was alive.

"Why was he angry with you?" I asked. "I don't know," he replied, with that petulance that is so characteristic of the Kaingáng when they are frightened. But in the afternoon he had an explanation, for he had stopped to gossip and had learned that Kemblén's grandson had had a quarrel with Yukwáya that very day. Kemblén, "therefore, became angry with her [Yukwáya] and made it dark. Kemblén knew that Yukwáya was angry, and therefore it became dark."

In characteristic Kaingáng fashion, people fall sick and die either because they are attacked by some *nggiyúdn* who wishes them ill or because they are seduced or "led off" by one who wants them for company. Thus the causes of illness and death are oriented toward both extremes of the Kaingáng world-view. In any event, the ultimate cause of death is complete soul-loss. Seduction is accomplished either through invitations to visit a "good country," i.e. where the hunting is good and the honey plentiful, or through sexual stimulation. When Vomblé's father tried to lure him away, it was through promises of plenty, but Klendó almost died because a female *nggiyúdn* wanted him for a sex companion.

The defenses against soul-loss are very simple. The victim may simply say, "Let's go back," to those who wish to take him away, or he may renounce his connection with the *nggiyúdn* if it happens to be an unconsummated sexual one. If it is consummated he is lost and soon dies. First he may go mad like Patklé, who copulated with a female *nggiyúdn*, or he may rot inside, like Kulá. Whoever has intercourse with the supernatural will not burn easily on the funeral pyre, and he is an evil omen to his relatives. "One night," said Vomblé, "Kulá called out to her brother: 'Waipó,

[19] Ceremonial father.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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761 Far from permitting them control over species of plants and animals, the pessimistic totemism of the Kaingáng simply adds one more gloomy trait to the prevailingly somber character of their supernaturalism. Their totems are solely omens of death, for "When the Klendó are about to die there is no honey—there are only bees. When the Wanyekí are about to die the tapirs are very thin, because they are Wanyekí's *mang*. The pine tree belongs to Thethé [the circle people], and when they are about to die there are no pine cones. When they die they burn them in a dry pine tree. Before Chulí fell there were no pine cones—and then he fell. They burnt him in a dry pine tree. Before the Brazilians killed Kuikégn, the pines were the same way."

762 Like most peoples the world over, the Kaingáng reject certain things as foods while they accept others. But their preferences have little to do with their totemic ideas. There is a story in an origin myth of one of the line people who swam about in the water so much that he became a capuvary, so that now the line people do not eat capuvary; if they were to do so it would be like eating their own people. But almost no one at all eats capuvary, nor do they eat armadillo or paca, that delicious fat little rodent that eludes the hunter like a streak of light. Some people abstain from tiger, but others eat its heart to make them valiant like the tiger, which roams and fights alone. None of these taboos are observed by everyone. Some animals from which the Kaingáng abstain were practically impossible for them to kill under the conditions of their old life, in which they had no traps or boats. The capuvary is taken by trapping, the paca by trapping or by pursuit in a boat from which the hunter may kill it with a trident in the shallow water where it has hidden. The swift-flying and hypersensitive wild ducks are commonly heard to approach, and the meat of anteater and certain water birds has a very bad flavor. There seems to be less reason for abstaining from the toad, the armadillo, and the tiger. The Kaingáng say that they do not eat the tiger because its fat is white (not yellow like other animals') and that they abstain from armadillo because its bones break so easily that they are afraid their own will break.

All of these things that the Kaingáng do not eat are called **khangglign**, which is the term they use for anything dirty. People who eat things that are **khangglign** will lose their teeth, break their bones, or grow old prematurely.

Omens

763 The prevailing reason for the interest of the Kaingáng in omens is death. "I saw that before Padumbá died it rained very heavily first," said Chukembégn. "Then the river rose after his death. The bees did not make honey—they just lived in the trees." All of this was because Padumbá was